

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (currently amended) A container with a removable handle, comprising:
  - a container having spaced first and second knobs;
  - a split tubular member having a central portion and spaced internal first and second contoured portions proximate opposite ends thereof, each of said contoured portions configured to receive one of said knobs, said first and second contoured portions being tensionably engaged with said first and second knobs when said central portion is grasped by a user, **and at least two radially spaced openings extending through said central portion, said radially spaced openings axially aligned along an axis substantially perpendicular to a central axis of said split tubular member.**
2. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 1, wherein said split tubular member is formed from a flexibly resilient material.
3. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 2, wherein said flexibly resilient material is plastic.
4. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 3, wherein said split tubular member is injection molded plastic.
5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) The container and removable handle of claim 1 5, wherein said central portion includes **at least** two radially spaced openings proximate said first contoured portion.
7. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 6, wherein said two spaced openings are axially aligned with each other.
8. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 7, wherein each of said openings has an elliptical configuration.
9. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 6, wherein said central portion includes two radially spaced openings proximate said second contoured portion.
10. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 9, wherein said two spaced openings are axially aligned from each other.
11. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 1, wherein each of said contoured portions is C-shaped in cross-section.
12. (withdrawn) The container and removable handle of claim 11, wherein at least one of said contoured portions includes a dimple extending outwardly from a periphery of said contoured portion.

13. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 1, wherein said central portion has a first diameter, and at least one of said contoured portions has a second diameter differing from said first diameter.
14. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 13, wherein said second diameter is less than said first diameter.
15. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 1, wherein said container is selected from the group consisting of a PET bottle, a plastic casing of an automotive battery, a plastic traffic barrier, and a plastic drum.
16. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 1, wherein said first and second knobs are axially aligned.
17. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 1, wherein said first and second knobs have an elliptical configuration.
18. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 1, wherein said first and second knobs have a cylindrical configuration.

19. (withdrawn) The container of and removable handle of claim 18, wherein at least one of said first and second knobs includes a lug extending outwardly from a side of said knob.
20. (original) The container and removable handle of claim 1, wherein said split tubular member is formed from a material selected from the group consisting of metal and plywood.
21. (withdrawn) A removable handle, comprising:  
a split tubular member having a central portion and spaced internal first and second contoured portions proximate opposite ends thereof, said first contoured portion configured to receive a first knob, said second contoured portion configured to receive a second knob, said first and second contoured portions being tensionably engaged with said first and second knobs when said central portion is grasped by a user.
22. (withdrawn) The removable handle of claim 21, wherein said split tubular member is formed from a flexibly resilient material.
23. (withdrawn) The removable handle of claim 22, wherein said flexibly resilient material is plastic.

24. (withdrawn) The removable handle of claim 23, wherein said split tubular member is injection molded plastic.
25. (withdrawn) The removable handle of claim 21, wherein said central portion includes at least one opening.
26. (withdrawn) The removable handle of claim 25, wherein said central portion includes two radially spaced openings proximate said first contoured portion.
27. (withdrawn) The removable handle of claim 26, wherein said two spaced openings are axially aligned with each other.
28. (withdrawn) The removable handle of claim 27, wherein each of said openings has an elliptical configuration.
29. (withdrawn) The removable handle of claim 26, wherein said central portion includes two radially spaced openings proximate said second contoured portion.
30. (withdrawn) The removable handle of claim 29, wherein said two spaced openings are axially aligned from each other.
31. (withdrawn) The removable handle of claim 21, wherein each of said contoured portions is C-shaped in cross-section.

32. (withdrawn) The removable handle of claim 31, wherein at least one of said contoured portions includes a dimple extending outwardly from a periphery of said contoured portion.
33. (withdrawn) The removable handle of claim 21, wherein said central portion has a first diameter, and at least one of said contoured portions has a second diameter differing from said first diameter.
34. (withdrawn) The removable handle of claim 13, wherein said second diameter is less than said first diameter.
35. (withdrawn) The container and removable handle of claim 1, wherein said split tubular member is formed from a material selected from the group consisting of metal and plywood.
36. (currently amended) A method of securing a handle to a container, comprising the steps of:
- providing a container having spaced first and second knobs, **each of the knobs having an elliptical configuration;**
  - providing a split tubular member having a central portion and spaced internal first and second contoured portions proximate opposite ends thereof, each of the contoured portions configured to receive one of the knobs;

aligning the first and second contoured portions with the first and second knobs;

engaging the first and second contoured portions around the first and second knobs;

**axially rotating the split tubular member about 90°; and**

tensioning the first and second contoured portions against the first and second knobs by grasping the central portion and thereby applying a force to the central portion.

37. (canceled)